

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 4, 2005. Claims 1 to 7 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 7 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to because Fig. 4 shows 5C and 8KS, while the specification refers to 5L and 8CK. Applicant has amended the specification to correct typographical errors such that the specification and the reference characters are now in accordance. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection.

The title of the invention was allegedly not descriptive. Applicant has amended the title as shown above. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

Claims 2 to 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Without conceding the correctness of the rejection, Applicant has made appropriate amendments to address this rejection. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Claims 1 and 5 to 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,040,924 (Tamagaki). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns an image processing apparatus for forming a visible image on a recording medium. The image processing apparatus features a timing signal for instructing the start of formation of a first color component image that differs depending on

the sequence of use of the apparatus' various image forming modes. The timing signal is output via a common signal line to the image formation controller. When a monochromatic image is to be formed on a preceding recording medium and a color image is to be formed on a succeeding recording medium, the timing signal corresponding to the succeeding recording medium is output earlier than the timing signal corresponding to the preceding recording medium. By virtue of these features, the delay is reduced when switching between a color image forming mode and a monochrome image forming mode.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus for forming a visible image on a recording medium conveyed by conveying means, based on an image data sent from an image formation controller, in a color image formation mode for forming a color image or a monochromatic image formation mode for forming a monochromatic image. The apparatus includes a plurality of color component image forming units that form a color component image respectively corresponding to a color component including at least black; a timing signal outputting part that outputs a timing signal for instructing to start a formation of a first color component image differing depending on image forming modes, the timing signal being output via a common signal line to the image formation controller. When a monochromatic image is to be formed on a preceding recording medium and a color image is to be formed on a succeeding recording medium, the signal outputting means outputs the timing signal corresponding to the succeeding recording medium earlier than the timing signal corresponding to the preceding recording medium.

In contrast, Tamagaki discloses a color printer in which yellow, magenta, cyan and black recording units are provided in tandem. Tamagaki shows that a yellow image formation of a page 2 is performed prior to a black image formation of a page 1 (See Fig. 21 of

Tamagaki). Fig. 21, however, merely depicts the timing of reading image data for two separated color images from a storage device for color printing. Tamagaki fails to disclose that an image printed on page 1 is an image printed in a monochrome image, while an image printed on page 2 is an image printed in a full color mode. That is, Tamagaki fails to disclose that when a monochromatic image is to be formed on a preceding recording medium and a color image is to be formed on a succeeding recording medium, the signal outputting means outputs the timing signal corresponding to the succeeding recording medium earlier than the timing signal corresponding to the preceding recording medium.

In addition, as Tamagaki fails to disclose or suggest how images to be printed in a monochrome image and a full color mode are managed, Tamagaki also fails to disclose a timing signal outputting part that outputs a timing signal for instructing to start a formation of a first color component image differing depending on image forming modes, the timing signal being outputting via common signal line to the image formation controller.

In light of the deficiencies of Tamagaki as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claim 7 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 7 is also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', written over a horizontal line.

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